

STORIES OF MAGICIANS

BANCROFT TELLS OF A NUMBER OF TRICKS THAT WENT WRONG.

Breslaw's Magnified Swan, De Grisy's Loss of a Ring, Anderson's Butler Trick and Herrmann's Poker Hand.

How hard it is to realize that a physician himself can be ever sick, when his study in life is the preservation of other people's health. And how quaint the thought of a lawyer's death when his mission of perpetrating the wills of dead men is considered. Equally grotesque is the idea of magicians themselves being tricked, when they live to deceive others. And the joke is all the more enjoyable on this account. A few instances of practical jokes played upon magicians may prove interesting because of their rarity. Breslaw, a celebrated magician of the last century, was on one occasion accused of the honor of giving an exhibition before the royal household of England. His best illusion was the production of a seemingly live swan floating on real water, and he reserved it as his last trick for the occasion referred to. Everything worked well in the production of the swan and water, a creation apparently of space, but alas, the swan would not float, but sat stationary as though in terror of its aquatic surroundings. No efforts on Breslaw's part could produce the movement in the bird. At last he realized the cause of the swan's sloth. The secret of the trick was known. It was performed by magnetism and the counteracting agency was a magnet in the pocket of Sir Francis Blake Delaval. Poor Breslaw! He was humiliated and never performed the swan trick again.

One of Pinetti's favorite tricks was the incarceration of a live bird in a box and its escape therefrom while the box, securely locked, was held in the hands of one of the spectators. On the death of Pinetti a London journalist involved the production of a very well-timed squib in his paper as an obituary: "Poor Pinetti, laid in his coffin, find, death is no conjurer and that he never suffers to escape, by sleight of hand, the bird which he once confined in his box."

De Grisy, the great French magician, received two disastrous accidents which well-nigh ruined him. One of his tricks was the firing from a pistol of a ring borrowed from one in the audience and "discovering" it afterward in the mouth of a live goldfish. Of course, the ring was always the same one, necessarily so for the purposes of the trick, and was made of gilt copper set with paste gems. It was always selected out of a number of rings offered, and of course, was in the hands of a confederate. The confederate, on one occasion, was not selected with the foresight that should have been displayed in his choice and proved to be a crook. When the ring was returned to him after the completion of the trick he arose in the audience and claimed he had been swindled.

"What is this, monsieur?" he angrily demanded, regarding first the ring and then the performer. "I gave you a gold ring set with brilliants and you return me worthless copper and paste."

Not only did De Grisy suffer the humiliation of the discovery of his imposture, but he actually had to pay the fellow a large sum of money equal in value to the supposititious ring to hush the matter up.

A more signal discomfiture to the same magician was the joke played on him while he was performing before the King of Naples. There was a card trick in the performance wherein a card was to be "forced," as the manipulation is termed, upon the King. Some one substituted for the card to be "forced" an ordinary playing card, one of the same size, inscribed with an epigram not insulting to the King. De Grisy, unconscious of the perpetration on him, performed the trick to the point of compelling the King to receive the obvious card. The King immediately left the salon, accompanied by the royal retinue, and flight alone saved the magician from arrest on the order immediately issued.

PANCAKE IN A HAT.

Miller's faux pas in the trick of cooking a pancake in the hat is an amusing anecdote. He was performing before a private party at Kelso, and among the company was an elderly gentleman, who sat close to the operating table, and caused some discomposure to Miller and his attendant by the closeness of his observation of their motions, and the grimaces and chucklings in which he indulged whenever he discovered, or thought he had discovered, the obviousness of any of the tricks was performed. The pancake trick is done by secretly introducing into the hat a ready cooked and hot pancake in a tin dish, and above this a gallipot. The batter is prepared, in sight of the spectators, in a similar gallipot, just as much smaller than the other as to fit snugly into it. The contents of the smaller gallipot are poured into the larger one, and both are withdrawn together, and the conjurer, after pretending to cook the pancake over a lamp or candle, presents it on the tin dish.

Miller's attendant was so much confused and distracted by the watching, grimaces and chuckling of the old gentleman that he omitted to place the gallipot in the hat, which a gentleman of the party had loaned for the purpose, and Miller poured the batter on the pancake before he discovered the omission. He was not so ready-witted as Robert-Houdin showed himself on similar occasions, nor was his attendant so equal to the emergency as the French conjurer's ministering proved in the face of such a disaster. They could only stare in bewilderment at the spoiled hat until Miller, recovering from his confusion, confessed his failure, explained in a manner in which the trick is done, and thereupon the inquisitive and chuckling old gentleman.

The arrest of Anderson, the "Wizard of the North," on the charge of murder is among the best anecdotes of a magician tricked. As told in the press of the day, the story reads as follows: "One day, towards the conclusion of an engagement at Elgin, he visited Forrest, a town twelve miles distant, to make arrangements for repeating his performance there, in the vicinity of the 'blasted heath' on which, according to tradition, Macbeth met the witches. Having made the requisite arrangements, he was directed by his printer to the residence of an elderly widow, who had apartments to let, which, proving suitable, were taken for one week.

"Ye'll excuse me, sir," said the widow, when he was about to depart, "but I must tell ye I'm a bit of a widow, and a' that I have to live by is what get by lettin' my apartments. Ither folk has engaged 'em, saying I might expect 'em on a certain day, but they didna come, and I was disappointed. It's an old sayin' that 'burnt bairns dread the fire.' Ye are a stranger, although a decent-lookin' man, and ye may do the same; and I hope ye winna object to pay half of the rent aforehand."

"Anderson made no objection, but at once handed four half crowns to the old lady. At that moment he remembered that he must see the printer again before he left Forrest, and, as the day which had threatened to be a wet one, was fine, he left his umbrella with the widow, whose good opinion on the payment in advance of one month of the week's rent had quite secured. But, unfortunately, the widow read the words 'Great Wizard of the North' on the handle of the umbrella when Anderson had left, and he observed on his return that she had changed color as she re-

garded him intently from head to foot without venturing to approach him.

"Save us," she faintly ejaculated. "What are ye?"

"I am a rather notorious character," Anderson replied, with a smile, "and I have no doubt, although you have never seen before, that you have heard of me. My name is Anderson, and I am known as the 'Wizard of the North.'"

"A wizard are ye?" said the frightened widow. "Then, for the love of goodness, gang out o' my house. I wadna lodge ye for ae night under my roof for a' the world. For the love of heaven, gang awa, and tak your umbrella along wi' ye."

"As the Elgin coach was shortly to pass the house Anderson did not pause to explain or remonstrate, but stepped at once towards the door, when the widow cried, 'Stop! Dinna leave oot belongin' to ye wi' me; tak' your siller wi' ye, and never let me see your face again.'"

MAGICIAN HELD FOR MURDER.

"Hastily taking the four half-crowns from her purse, she threw them upon the floor, screaming that they burned her fingers, and immediately fell back in a swoon of terror. In her fall her head struck a stool, slightly lacerating her cheek, and several of the neighbors, hurrying in on hearing her scream and fall, found her bleeding and apparently lifeless. The women cried out that the stranger had murdered the widow, and the men seized Anderson's arms to prevent his escape.

"At that moment the coach was driven up, and the driver, seeing a crowd about the widow's house, pulled up and inquired the cause of the emotion.

"On being told that a murder had been committed the guard leaped down, and, looking through the window, recognized Anderson, whom he had seen several times in Elgin. The coach started again, and Anderson, finding that he was in an awkward position, as the old lady gave no signs of life, demanded to be taken before a magistrate at once. This, he was told, was impossible, as there was no magistrate within seven miles, and all that could be done was to lodge him in the town goal until the next day.

"The goal the conjurer was taken, therefore, between a couple of constables, who were commendably prompt in taking his appearance. The coach went to Elgin, where the guard lost no time in spreading the news of the wizard's arrest, and, going to the assembly rooms, told the audience, who was just growing impatient at the conjurer's nonappearance, that 'they might conjure for themselves that night, for there would be no wizard, as he was where he would not get out, with all his magic; he was in Forrest's goal for murdering an old woman.' A thrill of horror ran through the crowded auditor; then a murmur arose, from which he paid his losses, depositing his gains in another pocket, untouched during the game. Hence his anxiety to use the money only and not the customary chips. He had just \$200 of Herrmann's money, which the magician never recovered.

So far I have escaped stage detection and social imposition, but I am ever on the alert, and when my time comes I hope to take my medicine quietly in the manner of other magicians gone before."

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GREAT PUFF FOR MANAGER CHARLES FROHMAN'S SUCCESSES.

No Other Metropolitan Producer in Recent Years Can Claim an Equal Number of Triumphs.

Special to the Indianapolis Journal.

NEW YORK, April 10.—Charles Frohman has provided New York this season, as he has done now for three theatrical seasons back, with nearly all of his play triumphs. This is a remarkable record for a metropolitan manager, especially when one takes a look back over the list of attempts at successes which have been made here since the season of 1892, and which presents a long stretch of managerial disasters, lightened and brightened by little else than the successes of one man. This is not a mere press agent's yarn, but is a fact, as investigation of the theatrical annals will disclose. It is no use, however, going back to the old history, but farther back, any less, wrapping paper will do very well, or even an old newspaper, and draw upon it the picture of the manager who has made his name in a way to delight nineteenth-century children fully as much as it ever could have done the ancient Egyptians.

To play the game it is necessary, first, to make the target. "To do this take a sheet of paper about three feet square or less; wrapping paper will do very well, or even an old newspaper, and draw upon it the picture of the manager who has made his name in a way to delight nineteenth-century children fully as much as it ever could have done the ancient Egyptians.

When you have thus drawn the twelve circles, you can go over the pencil lines with ink and number the spaces between the lines; tack your paper to a drawing board, bread board or any flat wooden surface, and your target is complete.

Let each player furnish himself with a dozen pins thrust through bits of cardboard or paper, upon each of which is written a number or initial different from those of the other players, and also with a catapult, blow gun, small bow and arrow, or a dart. Stand at whatever distance is agreed on from the target, each player in turn discharging his missile into the circle of his pins in the circle he strikes. If he hits one of the black lines he loses his turn, but if he does not strike the target at all he is out of the game.

After the first shot a player can either remove a pin already placed into the circle he has last struck, or set another of his pins in it, or counting from where the circle of his pins is struck, can move that pin as many circles toward the center as is indicated by the number of the circle he strikes. If this not only brings him to the center but leaves something over, he can use the remainder to place a new pin, or carry another forward.

If, while one player has one pin in a circle, another player gets more than one pin in the same circle, the latter captures the pin already there and removes it. If, however, a player captures the circle already occupied by two pins, he does not lose his, unless a third pin other than his own can be stuck in the same circle.

The circles are numbered from the outside to the center. The game consists in a specified number of points, generally from 25 to 50. If two are playing, or more, according to the additional number of missiles used in the game. When one of the players has no more pins on the target the game is over.

Each player counts the number of his pins which have reached the center and the number of pins he has captured, and he who has most added to his number of pins left in the target.

It is quite a little game when two players have each a pin in the same ring and each pin is getting nearer the center. The approach is rapid and increases with the danger that, having so many pins behind, one or the other pins may by a lucky shot capture his.

The aim of the player is three-fold: to protect his pins by getting more than one pin in the same circle; to gradually win his way toward the center and to be constantly on the alert to take the pins of his opponent. As the taking of one of the pins counts for as much as getting one of his own home, it is advisable to take the pins of the enemy's pieces, and this is done by keeping his pins behind them, so as to be able to take any advantage that may offer.

The game can be played on a table by the rules of the game, but it is more interesting and at least to young folks, it is possible, however, that this was the manner in which the game was originally played thousands of years ago, when Joseph was prime minister in the land of Egypt.

The game lasted two hours. Herrmann's life study of and practice with cards in his profession gave him complete mastery over his victim. The card tricks he played on the young man were more numerous than those worked by Hart's Heathen Chinee on Bill Nye in the famous game of euchre. Of course to avoid a too bare-faced swindle and at the same time lead his antagonist to greater recklessness, the magician threw off game after game, and the young man pocketed the money won with a pleased smile. He it said to his credit he never once flinched at his losses and Herrmann was the first to cry quits.

Then came the moment of triumph. The magician arose and in his suave manner tendered the youth his lost money, with the explanation of the swindle practiced upon him. To the astonishment of all present the victim refused the money, some \$800 in all, stating that he was not a child and never cheated a baby act; that if any man could cheat him before his eyes he was willing to suffer his losses and part with his money for the experience. He bowed himself out, not even waiting to partake of the champagne ordered in celebration of the event. This was a denouement not contemplated, and the disposition of the ill-gotten gains placed the company in a quandary. At last it was decided to contribute them to some public charity after deducting the wine bill. The wine was drunk amid hilarity and a twenty-dollar bill of the victim's money was tendered in payment. As the party was leaving the hotel the waiter tapped Herrmann on the shoulder, with the announcement that the bill offered was counterfeit. Another and another bill of like denomination offered proved likewise spurious, and the truth dawned on the party that the biters had been bitten. The gullible youth had provided himself with one pocketful of counterfeit bills, from which he paid his losses, depositing his gains in another pocket, untouched during the game. Hence his anxiety to use the money only and not the customary chips. He had just \$200 of Herrmann's money, which the magician never recovered.

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The Ways Return.

Many the ways that man must fare, The roads run up and down, Some thro' the country hillside fair, Some slink and some to town.

Some tortuous are and hard to keep, But others slip and slide, Where gardens grow and fountains leap And speech is sweet and kind.

Some stretch away midst alien sights, Midst strange, far-lying things; Others be near to native lights, No need of journeying.

And oh, the lingering, long quest, And stumbling, triumph, pain, The while man fares east and west Ere he returns again.

But one boon, one, is sure to be, How far so'er he roam: At last the wandering ways agree, At last they lead him home.

—Richard Burton, in the Outlook.

Pavereham, as the duel-fighting and love-making hero, and Miss Viola Allen, as the sweet-natured Gailie maiden, whose heart is completely won by the handsome-figured and love-longed-for swash-buckler, are successful realizations of the chivalrous and sentimental creations of the novelist as it is possible to imagine, and their love scenes get a half dozen curtain calls for them every night. The tremendous hit of this romantic play, which surpasses "The Prisoner of Zenda" in the skill with which it reflects the thrilling and charming chapters of the book, has led Mr. Frohman to determine on making it the only piece in which his stock company will appear during its forthcoming tour.

"Never Again," which is turning hundreds away from the Garrick Theater every night, and which will run there all through the season at the same rate, or which it will go to London, is a comedy—a sort of high-class farce-comedy—perhaps, a better definition—taken from the French, without loss of a single particle of the abundant bubbling fun of the original, and given the most extraordinary cast even New York has ever seen in a play meant to be merely amusing. E. M. Holland, the famous character actor from Palmer's company, who is also one of the well-known Holland brothers, who starred in "A Social Highwayman" last season, is in the piece, and with him are Agnes Miller, Elsie De Wolf, Fritz Williams, May Robson, of the Empire Theater Stock Company, Ferdinand Gottschalk, and Jessie Mackaye, of the Lyceum Theater Company, and other well-known players. All these people, whose best work is familiar to metropolitan theater-goers, find the characters of "Never Again" the finest vehicles they have yet had for expression of their artistic abilities. The story is a twisting one of a gay old fellow who skimpes now and again into undomestic ways, and who is surprised in the very midst of one of his adventures—and the most innocent adventure of all, at that—by his confiding wife, his daughter and many others, not to see whom at the moment he would have given the wealth of all the Aias. But he is caught, and the son-in-law agrees to help him out. Such screams of laughter, such excitement, such whirling, changing, clashing scenes—such sparkling fun and absurdity—as ensue one has not breath left to tell about after the laughing and shrieking are over.

The town got wind of how good a thing "Never Again" was before twelve hours had passed, and as a result a throng appeared at the door of the Garrick the second night that would have filled the theater four times over. Ever since then it has been a nightly case of turning away hundreds. Its success, financially and otherwise, away about "Charles the Autocrat," which yielded Mr. Frohman a fortune in its first season alone, as well as of "The Gay Parisians" and "Too Much Johnson," these three being the standards by which New Yorkers had up to this measured the fun qualities of every comedy offered. Mr. Frohman is satisfied that it is the greatest comedy he has yet had.

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HAB-EM-HAN.

Game Played by Egyptians in Joseph's Time Adapted to Modern Ideas.

Boston Globe.

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If, while one player has one pin in a circle, another player gets more than one pin in the same circle, the latter captures the pin already there and removes it. If, however, a player captures the circle already occupied by two pins, he does not lose his, unless a third pin other than his own can be stuck in the same circle.

The circles are numbered from the outside to the center. The game consists in a specified number of points, generally from 25 to 50. If two are playing, or more, according to the additional number of missiles used in the game. When one of the players has no more pins on the target the game is over.

Each player counts the number of his pins which have reached the center and the number of pins he has captured, and he who has most added to his number of pins left in the target.

It is quite a little game when two players have each a pin in the same ring and each pin is getting nearer the center. The approach is rapid and increases with the danger that, having so many pins behind, one or the other pins may by a lucky shot capture his.

The aim of the player is three-fold: to protect his pins by getting more than one pin in the same circle; to gradually win his way toward the center and to be constantly on the alert to take the pins of his opponent. As the taking of one of the pins counts for as much as getting one of his own home, it is advisable to take the pins of the enemy's pieces, and this is done by keeping his pins behind them, so as to be able to take any advantage that may offer.

The game can be played on a table by the rules of the game, but it is more interesting and at least to young folks, it is possible, however, that this was the manner in which the game was originally played thousands of years ago, when Joseph was prime minister in the land of Egypt.

The Ways Return.

Many the ways that man must fare, The roads run up and down, Some thro' the country hillside fair, Some slink and some to town.

Some tortuous are and hard to keep, But others slip and slide, Where gardens grow and fountains leap And speech is sweet and kind.

Some stretch away midst alien sights, Midst strange, far-lying things; Others be near to native lights, No need of journeying.

And oh, the lingering, long quest, And stumbling, triumph, pain, The while man fares east and west Ere he returns again.